3 Rue Bonaparte
Hotel de Londres
Paris
Dec. 14. 1884 (Sunday Eve.)

My dear Mrs. Jarosson;

Will you pardon me if I enclose to you a copy of the letter that I sent Mrs. Wilbour last June? - but I should like you to see my [illegible] feelings - which are still unchanged, with regard to my unfortunate action. In that letter I told Mrs. Wilbour the truth and nothing but the truth, yet I felt compelled - and still feel so - to refrain from putting on paper, the "whole truth".

Nothing, perhaps, would make me exactly excusable - yet the letter would certainly explain the "delusion" under which I was staggering and that led me to write that note.

Ah - Mrs. Jarosson - can you not guess how deeply I regret that such a thing should have happened?

You did not know me very long - but truely do you not know me well enough to believe that I would do anything in my power to have again the friendship of those dear friends that I severed with my own hands!

I have no one to accuse - the fault was mine alone - and I alone must bear the consequences - yet when I stop to realize, it [illegible] that I should have placed myself at such a disadvantage, when I was so blind to the truth.

I must have been dreaming then, - asleep - yet it was a slumber that was no friend to me!

The other evening I had the pleasure of dining with the Count — (his name I cannot recall), and it was *indeed* a pleasure, for he gave me my first news of Miss Joe - and how happy I was when I heard that she was really better!!

Until I met him, not one word had I heard of the Wilbours - all summer long and all the Autumn.

Little did my dear Mother dream of the truth that morning last October when she came to see me off on the steamer, & asked me to tell her when first I saw the Jarossons this season, and to tell her if they were all well; for my good mother is truely grateful to you, Mrs. Jarosson, for the pleasure you gave her "absent boy" last Spring. She is a lovely woman, and I had hoped that you would sometim[illegible] alas!

And those pleasant hours when I sat with a French grammer in my hand, being scolded by Miss Lecontiule.

How pleasant it is to recall them!

And the painting lessons - (what would I give to feel that they were not at an end! To think that I still might assist my "tallented pupil" - and receive ten times the pleasure myself - than the good I gave!) And those lovely waltzes -

Must I think that they are gone forever - Must I think that Mrs. Jarosson's kind face will never have a pleasant look towards me again! Is there nothing on Earth that I can do that will prove to her how I long for her to put out her hand to me, and say that she will believe that I am not so bad as appearances make me — and let me feel that her heart has softened towards me?

Did my note to Miss Jane cut one tenth part so deep as that freezing one that I rec'd from Havre last June, cut me! I hope not.

If still I [illegible] even a little corner of the three warm hearts of Mrs. Johnston and her two sweet daughters — I must always think the same of them, & they will always have my warm regard — unwanted tho' it may be — and I shall always hope that sometime fortune may throw in my way something that I may do that will give me back the friendship of the two families that I have lost.

With sincere hopes that you all are well
I remain, Mrs. Johnson
Faithfully Yours
Erskine L. [illegible]